**Tips for Creating an Effective Presentation**

PowerPoint presentations can move any lecture from "ok" to "exciting". Pictures, text, and sound can help the audience to remember the material better than when text is used alone. When a page of PowerPoint is filled with text, drawings, pictures, multimedia, sound bites, and more, the purpose of the slide is often lost to the audience. Remember the expression **KISS**: ***"Keep It Simple Silly!"*** Simplicity leads to great things, and this principle is directly applicable to the creation of PowerPoint slides.

**Quantity of text per slide:**

* Don’t use full sentences – the audience will read the slide versus listen
  + Use the 7 x 7 Rule: Maximum 7 lines with 7 maximum words per line
* Fewer words per slide = easier comprehension of the material by your audience
* Bullets are intended as the presenter’s notes as a reminder of what to discuss
* Short sentence fragments are acceptable

**Using Backgrounds in a Presentation:**

* **If using a dark background, use white font so audience can see and read it**
* **If using a light colored background (or white), use dark text**
* Use simple backgrounds: solid colors, or perhaps a blend of two colors
* Still images can be inserted into the background for use in PowerPoint slides, but this practice should be used sparingly
* A large, dark picture in the background of the screen will steal the attention of the audience from the content provided in the foreground
* Ideally the background color should be lighter while the text should be darker

**Tips for Using Text in a Presentation:**

* Correct spelling and grammar are a must and AVOID CAPITAL LETTERS
* It is important to use a similar font type and size throughout the entire presentation
  + Changing fonts in each slide of a presentation is incredibly distracting
  + Use a standard font consistently throughout the presentation
    - Times New Roman, Arial, Currier New, Geneva, Helvetica, Verdana, etc.
    - These fonts display on the web more effectively
* Use font sizes of 28 point or larger with the "standard" font types listed above
  + You can use smaller font sizes if necessary, but do not decrease below 20 as the audience can’t read it
* Titles on each slide can be a larger size than the body but consistent on every slide
  + Title font size = 32 and the body font size = 28 on each slide
* When a topic is complicated and material runs for many slides, it might be tempting to use expressions like "see previous slide" for a critical piece of information. This is highly discouraged as the reader doesn’t always remember.
* Slang words should be treated carefully and not used unless absolutely necessary
* WordArt - not recommended as it distracts the audience from the main topic
  + Focus becomes on the "fun" graphic representation of the word or phrase
  + Use WordArt sparingly to keep your audience's attention intact

**Tips for using Multimedia:**

* Transitions can be used to introduce text to the audience. Some of the transitions are fast and attention gathering. Use as follows:
  + Transitions should be short, quick and consistent throughout a presentation
  + Transitions which vary from page to page (or the same page) can be distracting
  + Wild, circular transitions as well as transitions that "peek" before appearing (or disappearing altogether) should be avoided
* Movie Files:
  + Limit each PowerPoint page to one multimedia **movie** file per slide
    - Too much can distract the audience
* Music tracks (whole or partial)
  + Can occasionally be used to emphasize certain themes within the presentation
  + Use sparingly
* Multimedia Sound clips and sound bites:
  + Can be inserted at appropriate junctures
  + Sound bites should be used sparingly - an overabundance of sound bites can become tedious, somewhat predictable and often boring
  + To be avoided at all costs: any sound that plays at every transition of text
    - Hearing a drum roll, clapping, or some other sound continually sends the listener's attention into avoidance
* Pictures, clip art, and still images:
  + Can and should be displayed in PowerPoint including GIF, JPG, PNG, BMP, PCT, and others
  + Pictures should be kept to a minimum per page as too many pictures can result in a loss of the audience’s attention